

February 20, 2017

Testimony RE: Inter-district Magnet School Funding: ACES Educational Center for the Arts

Dear Senator Catherine Osten, Senator Paul Formica, and Representative Toni Walker:

My name is Annika Fisher and I am a constituent in Hamden. I am deeply alarmed about the budget reduction ECA is facing and ask you to advocate for art-focused education and secure adequate funding for this magnet school.

ECA provides an incredibly high level of professional education and represents students on a regional scale unmatched by any other school in the state. ECA receives more national, state, and regional arts awards and honorable recognitions than any other school in the state. It is a demonstrably huge asset to the community at large and must be preserved.

On a personal level, I would like to tell you about my daughter, Franziska Lee, a ninth grader in the Creative Writing department. Franziska has always been an exemplary student, earning exclusively As. She received perfect scores on her last Connecticut State Smart Balanced test (scoring 2769 out of 2769 in ELA/Literacy and 2802 out of 2802 in Mathematics.) She could attend any high school anywhere. We chose to send her to Hamden public schools precisely because she can attend ECA.

Writing is her passion, and the high level of training and attention she receives from her teachers (professionals in their field) as well as interaction with similarly motivated and talented peers is astounding. Students like her can easily become disenchanted and under-stimulated in their high school years but because of ECA, Franziska is more engaged and high-performing than ever. ECA is a big part of our family's commitment to the area and to the state and we want our tax dollars sent there. A reduction to ECA would be a huge blow to the merit of our region with wide-ranging ramifications.

I believe it is imperative that ECA continues to receive full funding.

Please contact me if you would like any further information on ECA and Franziska's experience: Annika Fisher, 152 Waite St. Hamden, CT 06517, (203) 745-5974, annikafisher@gmail.com

Sincerely,

Annika Fisher
152 Waite St. Hamden, CT 06517